8: Merriam& d'Azevedo E-4,5 (1954-1955) 1957
NT20 Washo NT20

He was *in* that song and it made a connection—took him down the road. You can tell he liked the gourd and drum, too. They really keep him going." 668* 533* [183]

4. "He has that real Indian sound in his voice—like the old-time Indians."

There is little real response to questions dealing, for example, with the difference between good and bad songs; it is evident that "good" and "bad" take the musician immediately to the texts rather than to music analysis—"No, it all depends on the wording, but we don't know the wording of the other tribes' language so we have to trust that it is a good song"; "Just the sound might sound better in some song, but it don't mean any better as long as the man singing is a good man. There are no bad songs unless a man is thinking bad."

It seems clear that a song is judged not so much for or by itself as it is in terms of a total situation. No informant speaks of technique or structure; any special effect of technical finesse is seen as a whole, that is, as a total reaction of the commentator to the personality, association, and potency of the performer as well as to his equipment—the perfection of his rattle, and whether he was in good voice. Songs are not things in themselves but are vehicles through which religious emotions and concepts are expressed. They are something that has to be dreamed, heard in the mind's ear, performed; and the concept of "song" abstracted from "performance" is not present. The singer himself is caught in the totality of the performance; it is a religious and emotional experience for him—he may "take a trip when he sings," and he never just "sings a song." "When I'm singing," said Z, "I'm praying in the Tipi and going on the journey over that road." 668* 533* 182 781

III

Vocal style

McAllester (1949:65–6) has noted a special Peyote vocal technique which corresponds best to Herzog's Type B. "In general the Peyote songs are sung in a rather simple vocal style. There is usually somewhat greater tension on the vocal chords than is used by Europeans, there is somewhat greater use of accents and grace notes, and there are occasional pulsations on certain notes, particularly if they are quarter notes or longer. But the high degree of tension, the quavers, breaks, shakes and shouts of Type A American Indian singing are, often, much reduced or quite absent" (p. 65). These conclusions fit the Washo Peyote vocal style almost perfectly. 668* 533*

There is, however, one special vocal effect called a "shaking sound"; the ability to produce it is considered to be the mark of an excellent singer. At the same time, according to one informant, "That shaking sound you hear sometimes in the Tipi is the medicine working, not just the man does that; the medicine and good thoughts do that." The sound referred to is a particularly vibrant quality to the voice which gives the impression that many voices are singing at once in a slightly disharmonic, vibrating manner. Within the tipi the effect is quite dramatic; the tipi seems to be shuddering and at moments the tent poles appear to be shaking against a strong wind. Singing of this sort is